[5 cont.]

175 177 into his culture, especially into the economy, some of their social institutions, and even in the aspect of their racial composition. Acculturation has been greatly accelerated in recent years due to the ever increasing presence of foreign elements in [648] La Guajira Peninsula, facilitated by the intervention of the government in this administrative section, by the development of communication, and by the commercial possibilities that dealing with the natives presents.

● 105 175 177 The fundamental change in the Guajiro's life occured in their economy. Until the arrival of the conquistador, according to the data available, the Guajiro were a hunting and fishing people who lived in a constant state of nomadism to the point of having no true habitations, as has been stated by different chroniclers of Conquest times. They also practiced a rudimentary agriculture, mainly the cultivation of corn and yucca, the bases of their vegetable food and of their principal drinks.

[648] With the establishment of stock raising centers by the Spaniards in the regions bordering on La Guajira, the natives found a new source of subsistence. They started a series [6] of thefts from the haciendas which enabled them to obtain animals suited for raising, which adapted wonderfully to the normal conditions of their territory, where during the winter season pasture grows spontaneously, pasture which previously had served only to feed the deer and other herbivorous animals which form part of the fauna of La Guajira.

With the introduction of this new economic element the native began, step by step, to change his economy of fishing, hunting, and rudimentary agriculture into a new system based principally on stock grazing. His state of a nomadic hunter was transformed to that of herdsman, also nomadic because of the geographic conditions we have just described in previous paragraphs. They also changed their mode of transport by learning to use horses and asses, and even their tactics of war were appreciably changed once they could make use of horses in their battles, placing them thereby on an equal footing with the Spanish conquistador; [439] as in addition to this decisive element, they could also count on firearms obtained in the pearl trade with foreign ships which came up their coast.

[6 cont.]

105 177 However, at the beginning the fundamental change in their economy did not affect their most characteristic social institutions. They preserved, almost to the present, their family organization based on the exogamic line of kinship and all the other institutions which derive from, or are directly or indirectly related, to it. Only now with the presence of an ever increasing number of foreign elements who are attracted to La Guajira territory by different circumstances is the Indian gradually losing these fundamental ideas of his organization and beginning to change them, forced to do so by events, to the point that today it is becoming difficult to decide up to what point a social phenomenon is autochthonous and to what point it is impregnated with new ideas brought in by evangelism, government and military officials, and traders.

195 185 In the racial aspect the phenomenon shows up less strongly, although, as in other aspects, it has been gradually accelerating as means of communication develop and the comunbend between the islands of Aruba and Curaçao, the department of Magdalena, and the port of Maracaibo increase. Racial mixing [mestizaje] began in the colony not only between Spaniards and Indians, as happened in the greater part of Latin America, but also with the Negroes who were acquired as slaves from the Dutch and British slave traders in exchange for pearls. Naturally, this mixture was of insignificant proportions, but [?] at the present time it is developing more rapidly, stemming from the element, also Negroid, of the coastal areas of Colombia and Lake Maracaibo. In spite of all this, at the present time one can still find a large percentage of the pure element in La Guajira, especially in the regions distant from the traffic with Maracaibo or with the interior of Colombia, or relatively isolated from civilizado centers of La Guajira such as Uribia, Puerto Estrella, Puerto López, etc.

• • •

132 93 In the past five to six years La Guajira has suffered extremely severe summers which have almost completely crushed its economic bases, stock grazing and agriculture, for scarcely enough rainfall has fallen to save their pastures or their harvests.

[30 cont.]

But the Conquest came. The Guajiro Indian kept his independence by means of war and raids and maintained his personality intact as far as possible. His internal organization endured and continued manifesting itself without changes for a time: family organization, bond service, slavery, exocian wars, the laws of inheritance and compensation payment, all the social structure, including marriage, continued in the traditional forms. However, the theft of livestock from the neighboring Spanish ranches began, and the Guajiro Indians learned to master the art of stock grazing until they became converted into a group of herders with occasional agriculture, hunting, and fishing.

The situation was thus undergoing a change apparently gentle in the form it took, but violent in the results it produced on marriage, inheritance, the status of the clan as a collectivity and of the individual in particular, which we attribute to the cause just noted and also to the acculturation provoked by the ever increasing number of civilizado elements in the peninsula: missionaries, military men, employees, traders, and adventurers, who have managed to introduce, as we have said in the introduction, a number of customs from their places of origin, still small [in number] but which slowly are beginning to undermine the social organization of the natives.

All this has clashed with the strongest institution of primitive La Guajira, the shaman, who has had to withstand the challenge of the missionaries, who inculcate in the Indians' minds Catholic beliefs or Christian beliefs in general, absolutely opposed to the primary animism and the magic laws which determined, and still determine, in part the sex, lives, and deaths in general of all and each one of the members of the Guajiro community.

The new concept of wealth based on stock grazing, the presence of civilizado elements, the network of communications that now cross the peninsula, the decisive action of the missionaries and schools have all combined to reduce the shaman to his minimum proportions. Of course, there still remain elements in the native which allow one to classify him as formed by a magic mentality, but external influences are carrying him

B. Pineda Giraldo--90 E-6 (1947) 1950 9C13 Guajiro 9C13

[84 cont.]

him on his journey and which remain his only possessions, since the rest will be distributed among his heirs -- take on the quality of untouchables.

2. The poisoned arrow. The second sacrifice about which we gathered information has a greater importance than the previous one for two reasons: first, because it is the sacrifice of a human being, and second, because it is linked to a series of ceremonies set in motion to obtain a certain end, the deadly power of the imáka, or poisoned arrow, or better said, the magic arrow.

This sacrifice, so far as we could observe, is no longer practiced in La Guajira. According to the information gathered, it was practiced exclusively by the Kusina Indians, inhabitants of the sierra of that name. They were bellicose Indians, warriors, robbers, and animal stealers, who kept the other communities of the peninsula in an incessant state of tension by their attacks and evil-doings. We think it interesting to point out here that these Indians, commonly known as Cocina, according to all the information obtained did not constitute in themselves a separate cultural group. Their language was the same as that of the other Guajiro; their customs were relatively the same, and their physical type identical. Everything seems to indicate that they were no more than social outcasts, all those who, for crimes committed and not paid for in accordance with established laws, had found it necessary to unite themselves into societies outside the law. The question is not entirely clear, and it will be difficult to make it so because Kusina Indians are no longer found in La Guajira.

Bows and arrows stood out among the arms used by the Guajiro. (We say "stood" out because now they chiefly use rifles of foreign make). One of these arrows, which they call poisoned, bears the name of imáka. The shaft of this arrow is made of a thin piece of wood taken from the tree called parára and measures approximately 80 centimeters in length. At the upper end of this sharpened shaft is placed poison of a ray or the bone of a poisonous serpent. This imáka is what the Kusina Indians used as a last resort in their battles with Whites or with

4: Petrullo E-5 (1935) 1937
SC13 Goajiro SC13

121 the field of law is 'coterminous with that of organized legal sanctions.' If there are no 'legal sanctions,' obligations are considered as matters of custom and conventions. He further suggests the use of 'public delicts' and 'private delicts' to classify violations of law which in our society would fall into the criminal and civil classes respectively.[3] Malinowski, justly calling attention to the fact that the field of law does not limit itself to prohibitions but also enjoins duties, extends the term to include binding obligations governing the intercourse of daily life and enforced by a 'specific mechanism inherent in the structure of society.'[4]

While it is not within the scope of this paper to examine critically the various concepts of what constitutes law, we may well ask if its existence in primitive society is dependent upon what one accepts as its definition. We are given the choice of admitting either that certain societies do not know law, or that law is present in all societies in the form of reciprocal obligations which include many phases of behavior which we are accustomed to call either custom or moral obligation. Still it may be granted that in any society there occur breaches of custom, which are recognized as trespass on the recognized rights of the individual and perhaps on the entire community, for the composition and rectification of which there are known and accepted acts whose nature is set and limited by precedent. These are in contrast to those breaches which may bring on the offender only social reprobation in a mild form through giving him a 'bad name.' The former ought to fall within the province of law as generally understood in our society, while the latter may properly be included in the field of morals.

●105 Before proceeding with a description of Guajiro concepts of law and of custom it may be well to outline briefly the structure of their society. It is estimated that there are between ten and [161] twenty thousand Guajiro inhabiting the peninsula that takes its name from them. Though most of the territory belongs to Colombia and a narrow coastal strip is within Venezuelan borders, the Guajiro live almost independently of both [133] governments. The land is arid, lacking running water except in the hills of Macuire, where there are some springs. Most of

4: Petrullo E-5 (1935) 1937
SC13 Goajiro SC13

the men speak some Spanish in addition to their native language. Some of them know how to read and write. They are almost entirely pastoral, possessing great herds of horses, asses, sheep, goats, and cattle. They have borrowed a great deal from the Europeans but they have also kept their own culture to a remarkable degree. As usual, native elements are most strongly present in the non-material phases of culture. Unfortunately they are not united or organized into a modern state, though against all foreigners they stand together as a unit. Authority is acquired by certain caciques through their wealth and membership in the 'casta,' the major social grouping in Guajiro society. Each casta claims a mythological origin and holds sovereignty over a well-defined territory. Many of these castas or social groupings are further subdivided. Each casta has its caciques whose function is chiefly to settle disputes and whose position is inherited, matrilineally. The oldest of them is allowed more authority, but generally it is the wealthiest man, and the one who can marshal more retainers, armed with rifles and revolvers, who is listened to with greater respect. There are further divisions in Guajiro society. At the top are the caciques and their families who are rich and powerful. The next group is composed of peons or retainers in the service of the upper stratum, and at the bottom are the 'slaves' who have been born in that condition or have been enslaved following an offense to some powerful group, and who can even be let out to work for planters in the sugar fields of Zulia The life of the poor people has not changed much since early times. Polygamy is widely practised, as is also concubinage, by the wealthier men. Each wife lives in her own rancho and there awaits the occasional visit of her husband. The children inherit property and social affiliations through the mother. Disputes that arise within a casta are settled by arbiters chosen by the families of the litigants. Disputes inter-casta may be settled by arbitration if violence is not desirable. Generally the killing of an individual gives rise to armed action with an eventual composition by payment.

My informants attempted to demonstrate the difference be-

/531 cont./

121
114 3. M. Gusinde. "Bericht über meine südafrikanische Forschungsreise 1950/51 /Report on My South African Field Trip, 1950-51/," Anthropos, 47, 1952, pp. 388-404.

Vienna, who at that time was with the Internat. F.A.O. for Colombia, had been very helpful to me. Soon after our auto journey together through that dried-up peninsula, he died unexpectedly. My thanks to him are thus expressed here posthumously.

128 Only a selection from my ethnographic observations among the Guajiro people are presented here. They are preceded by what has already been ascertained on the same subjects by other authors.

1. Earlier Reports

● 105
175 At the time of the discovery of the New World, the Guajiro were the /532/ branch of the Aruak /Arawak/ group that had pushed farthest to the northwest on South American soil. Before the Conquest they obtained their livelihood from hunting and fishing, together with some agriculture. Animal husbandry, however, acquired considerable ascendancy through the introduction of domestic animals at the time of the Spanish colonization. Juan de Castellanos reported that as early as the period of his sojourn there (around 1550) quite a large quantity of livestock was present. Since then, and up to our day, this economic activity has undergone no structural change worth mentioning; at present, however, far-reaching efforts at accommodation to the so-called Western manner of thinking and way of life are seen (4).

4. Cf. Vegamian, Crist (1958 and 1959), José Augustín de Barranquilla, and others.

/532 cont./

105 175 614 Only a few accounts concerning the social order and political organization of the Guajiro are available from that period. It cannot be ascertained when the Spanish conquistadors first found clues to the family groups existing there, true sibs /Sippen/ in the sense of modern ethnology. Father Álvarez José Nicolás de la Rosa (5) in 1739 described certain burial

[113]

5. Under "Álvarez" I am citing in the following the rare work, Floresta de la Santa Iglesia Catedral de la Ciudad de Santa Marta /Anthology of the Santa Iglesia Cathedral of the City of Santa Marta/, compiled by Father Álvarez Don José Nicolás de la Rosa in 1739 and printed in Valencia in 1833. Francis C. Nicholas translated significant sections from this work into English and supplied supplementary notes which a trip through Guajira induced him to make. According to his judgment, "the book forms a stepping-stone to a study of the history and antiquities of the Indians of northern South America" /cited in English/ (p. 606). This translation, with the title, "The Aborigines of the Province of Santa Marta, Colombia," is to be found in American Anthropologist, 3, 1901, pp. 606-649. Pages 625-636 are devoted to the Guajiro.

ceremonies and in this connection made the incidental remark that they were held "according to the castes [clans] by which they are distinguished" /cited in English/ (p. 634). He enumerated six, "thus: Casta de Guacamaya [macaw] (this is the

105 /532 cont./
115 highest), Casta de Paguil, Casta de Guacharaca, Casta de
614 Mono, Casta de Machin, Casta de Gallinazo (this is the poorest)" /cited in English/ (ibid.). Explanatory additions are lacking. In the light of later successful inquiries, however, these few statements are given their full meaning.

Not until 1870 did A. Ernst publish an extended list of these totem groups (p. 329). He enumerated twelve of them and called them "tribes /Stämme/," which "have definite dwelling sites." He correctly separated from them the so-
101 called Cocinas, which "perhaps are a different tribe than the
115 rest of the populace and a vagabond gang of robbers that makes
571 all paths unsafe"(6).

6. Father Álvarez had already referred to them as "more barbarous than any of the Guagiros, and consequently less tractable and more dangerous, horrible and proud" /cited in English/ (p. 635). In the same sense Stutzer (p. 136) describes them as "dregs of all castes. They murder in order to rob. It is regarded as dangerous to pass through their area alone or in small groups..." They do not merit further mention.

115 A few years later the British engineer, F. Simons,
614 traveled through Guajira. He related in his excellent report to the Royal Geographical Society (1885): "The Guajiros are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient clans of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers... Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above /533/ /a table appears here/ /534/ their

[text continues on p. 6]

C /5 cont./
000 curiously enough even the Indians who remain faithful to their own language and customs seem to possess this characteristic more than in other countries.

There was not much more activity in the roads of Riochacha than in the harbor of Santa Marta. A few goletas rode there, which were to leave for Curaçao and Goajira for pearl-fishing and here and there a few dugouts from Dibulla or Camarones, another coastal village. One never sees steamships here. The town was enlivened by poor people, the picturesque Goajiro Indians and Negroes, more than it gave an impression of lively trade and commerce. The few more stately buildings near the shore, which make the town appear rather attractive from the roads, and adjacent to extensive streets of wretched huts. The immediate hinterland, as well as the beach zone on both sides, with their cactus vegetation, gave an impression of desolate wastes.

G
● 105 /6/ The town is given a characteristic coloring by the Goajiro, who come every day in swarms from the eastern shore and provide fish, beef, and milk. Also one can see near the town in many places not far from the sea their more than simple shelters lightly covered with brushwood, which are only supposed to keep out the sun, for in Riohacha it very rarely rains. Many are employed as household help; they draw on a rope along the streets the rolling water barrels that bring water in from outside for all purposes, and they beg, but at the same time always keep a certain decency. The women are dressed in a long, loose, shirt-like cotton garment, which reaches down to the feet. When they raise it to walk, one usually sees black and white strings of beads above their ankles. Strings of beads also decorate their necks. The upper body of the men is bare or clad in a shirt which is held together around the hips by a wide, woven belt and often hangs down a little at the back. They always wear a loincloth. Some look very picturesque with a plaited headband, which among other things bears above the forehead three tail-feathers of the red arara, or even a rhomboid-shaped headpiece, in addition to the black facial painting of both sexes, particularly in the area of the eyes. More often the headband is replaced by a cloth (Ill. 2, 3 a and b).

G /6 cont./
105 Want among them during the past years of drought, which has spoiled the pastures of their herds of cattle, is said to have driven these Indians more and more in among the population of Riohacha. One also comes across them in Dibulla and along the
G 114 coast to it. From the ethnographic point of view the sight of them is a great reproach; why have they not been thoroughly studied long ago? Descriptions of what one sees are not sufficient, no more than the purchase of their tools or grammars and vocabularies in the manner of Father Celedon, which, as scrupulous as they are, are not adequate for what is required today, because of their narrow, schematic reduction to rules and lack of control on the basis of texts. Admittedly we owe him, and all who have written about the Goajiro, our thanks and our appreciation, not only because it is through their efforts that anything at all is known, but also, considering the difficult conditions of that time, for the scientific attitudes and the costs, which could barely be afforded, for long, strictly scientific ethnographic publications. Yes, still today we must be grateful for every single enrichment of our knowledge; but the professional ethnographer must always bear in mind that he should prefer a more detailed investigation of a single tribe rather than a hasty visit to several, or that at least he should not do the latter without having accomplished the former task.

C 000 If, by virtue of its stately buildings, Santa Marta still gave the impression of a princely residence, if one still felt there, through the daily connections with Barranquilla by means of the railroad and inland navigation and by reason of the steamships in the harbor, the pulsebeat of the world's traffic, in Riohacha one had /7/ already moved considerably closer to the native way of life and the isolation which one faced. There were still hotels and newspapers from Barranquilla there, one could still examine there daily the war reports which the German and British consuls received, but, on the other hand, the members of the great nations appeared only by chance, and I was supposed to provide, not receive, the latest news. But I could not confirm the wild rumors that Calais had been taken by the Germans. So now I again had to depend on my personal mail, which arrived at long monthly intervals and which brought me in the Bogotá "Unidad" the German news sent